

Event Name: BFHD COVID-19

Report Period: 6/1/2022 – 6/31/2022	Mission #: 20-0265	Jurisdictions Impacted: Benton & Franklin Counties
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YELLOW HIGHLIGHTS DENOTE NEW/CHANGED INFORMATION

General Situation/Overview:

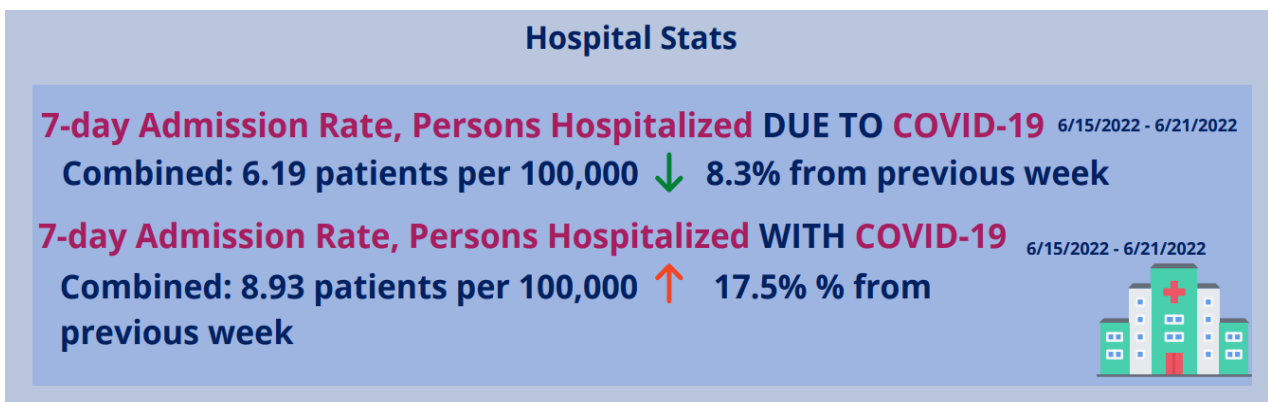
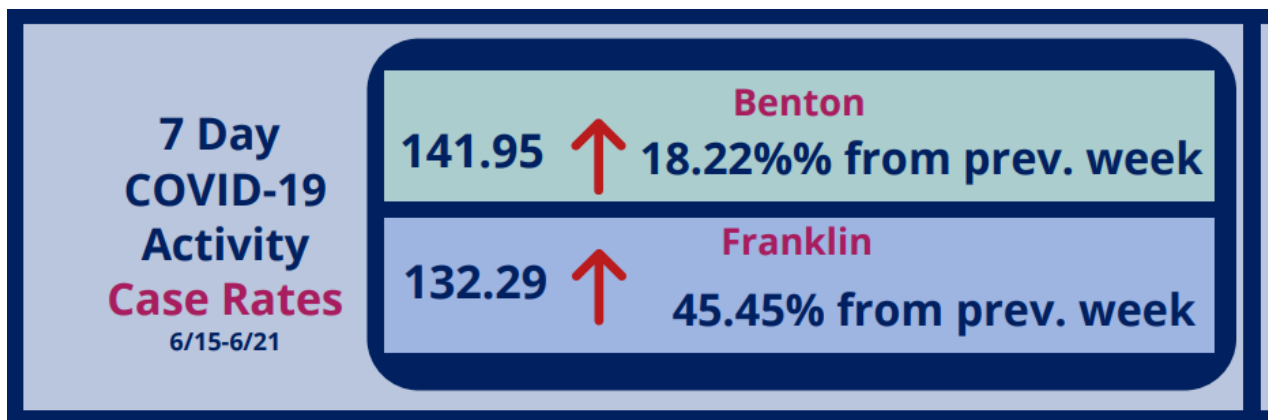
BFHD has been activated 28 months in the COVID-19 response to address the mitigation of COVID-19 disease in our community. The Omicron wave led to our highest case rate in the last two years which stretched our healthcare systems and contact tracing to their limits. During June we had 1,658 positive confirmed PCR cases of COVID-19 reported and 9 reported deaths. The combined Benton-Franklin 7-day case rate is 136.12/100,000. Benton and Franklin Counties have lost a combined total of 693 people to Covid-19 in the last 28 months.

Hospitalization admissions with COVID are beginning to rise again, although not as sharply as during the peak of the Omicron wave. Our healthcare systems are still stressed due to the acuity of patients who need care and significant loss of healthcare staff. Hospitals are also reporting a significant increase in behavioral health needs that were delayed due to the pandemic or have been exacerbated by the pandemic. These increased stressors are reducing overall available beds. Vaccines continue to minimize hospitalizations and deaths. Masks continue to be required in healthcare settings which include behavioral health, optometry, dental and primary care clinics. While masks are not required, masking is encouraged due to the increasing positivity rate within the Benton-Franklin communities to protect oneself and loved ones.

Case counts inaccurately reflect the true disease burden in our communities due to at home testing availability, however, confirmed tests show 32.68% positivity rate which more accurately correlates with the wastewater data which continues to rise. Wastewater continues to show significant increase in concentrations over the last 30 days

BFHD maintains activation level at 2 as the agency is still responding to the pandemic and not just monitoring cases and outbreaks.

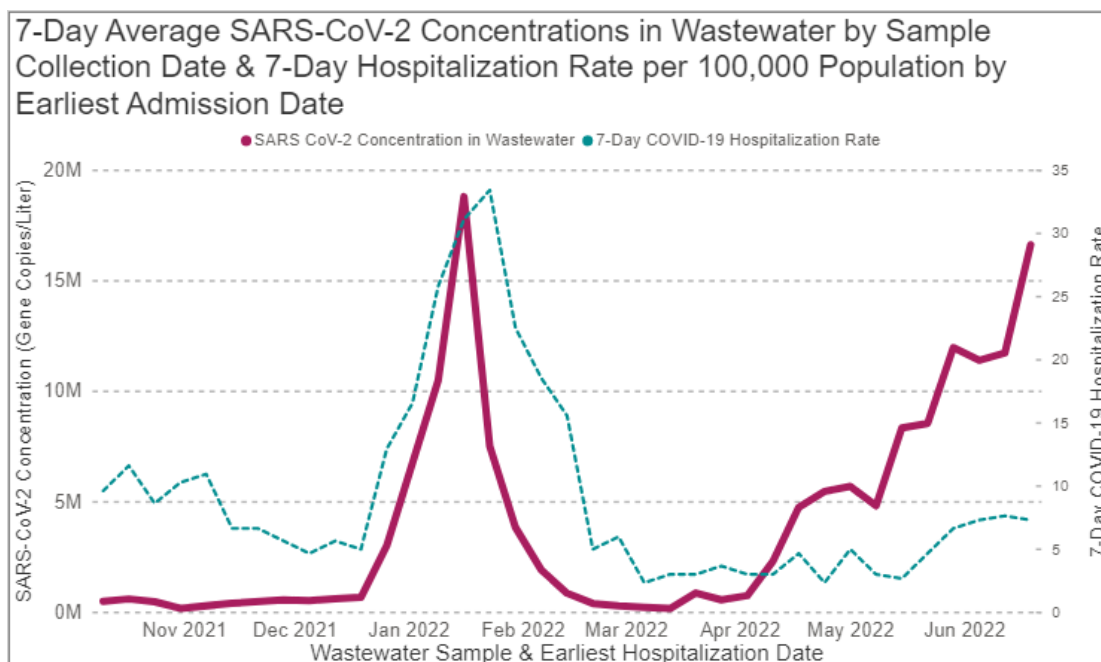
Benton and Franklin County At-A-Glance:



***Confirmed:** Detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA using a molecular amplification detection test or by sequencing results.

****Deaths** Due to changes in the Vital Statistics Law (RCW 70.58A) that support increased security on personal information, access to data for death records is more limited. BFHD will report deaths weekly on Thursday's.

******* Hospital admissions were discontinued being displayed on the BFHD website on 1/27/2022



Wastewater testing tab was added to the BFHD Data Dashboard on April 28. It will be updated on Thursdays.

Wastewater surveillance data is most useful when used in conjunction with other data. Early warning systems such as wastewater surveillance can detect small changes as a signal for early action.

State and County Dashboards

1. [COVID-19 Data Dashboard:: Washington State Department of Health](#)
2. [COVID-19 Case Counts - Benton Franklin Health District \(wa.gov\)](#)

OUTBREAK MITIGATION & DATA:

- Active Outbreaks in the community: these outbreaks meet the definition of an outbreak per DOH guidelines
 - **General Business Community** - 1 active; 1 pending investigations
 - **Long Term Care Facilities** – 9 active; 8 on the watch list
 - **HealthCare Settings** –1 active; 1 pending investigations
 - **Childcare Settings** – 0 active; 0 pending investigation
 - **Schools** –0 active; 0 pending investigations
- BFHD Outbreak report: [Outbreak Report](#) published 6/15/2022
- [Outbreaks in Washington State K-12 Schools](#) – updated monthly

CONTACT TRACING & CARE COORDINATION:

Contact tracing is shifting to a more strategic approach. Instead of reaching out to every person who tests positive for COVID-19, BFHD is joining Washington Department of Health to focus CICT efforts on four key areas:

- Outbreak Investigation
- Case investigations in high-risk settings
- Targeted case investigations among those at risk of more severe illness
- Targeted case investigations among those with unusual illness presentation

Those who do not fall within the categories above are strongly encouraged to notify their close contacts if they test positive for COVID. Those who test positive, and their contacts are asked to call the BFHD **COVID-19 line at 509-460-4358 for English or 509-460-4359 for Spanish** if they need assistance.

- Care Coordination team connects people in isolation or quarantine to the services they need to stay isolated. This may be providing a Walgreens Hygiene kit or a Kroger Food box or connecting them with rent assistance, grocery or prescription delivery, test kits or other services.

COVID-19 PREVENTION: VACCINES & OUTREACH:

- BFHD has a mobile vaccine program to provide booster vaccinations to homebound residents. Residents in the Benton-Franklin County area who are homebound can schedule an appointment for their booster vaccination with the front desk 509.460.4200.
 - Pediatric Vaccine for babies and toddlers are now available at community pop up clinics and pediatric provider offices. Some pharmacies are able to vaccinate down to 3 years old as well.
 - [Vaccinate WA: Find COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Near You](#)
 - BFHD continues to be a Vaccine Depot to ensure equitable access of vaccine to healthcare providers in the Benton-Franklin counties as well as supporting surrounding counties who need vaccine as well.
 - BFHD Information team maintains a list of community vaccine clinics on the BFHD Web page [COVID-19 Vaccine Information - Benton Franklin Health District \(wa.gov\)](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccination by Benton & Franklin Census Tract Map - February 2022 *](#) -This new map overlays vaccination rates along with Social Vulnerability tracks.
 - Evuashield and Paxlovid are now available through Birds Eye Medical. They can test and treat on site at their clinic in Pasco. You can schedule an appointment with them by calling 360.688.7044
- BFHD continually updates the webpages. This period the mask page, the vaccine page, the Long Term Care page, and the FAQ pages were updated. FAQ's: <https://covid19.bfhd.wa.gov/covid-19-vaccine-information/>

COMMUNITY TESTING:

- **CBC-West Test Site:** To date the site has administered **218,340 COVID tests**. The 14-day positivity rate at the test site is **32.68%** in the previous 7-day period.
 - BFHD has transitioned management of the CBC-West site to UW Medicine. This change was seamless with no disruption of service to the community. Hours and days of operation remain the same.
 - **Richland Community Test Site:** This site was combined with Pasco's CBC-W due to decreased demand for PCR tests. CBC-W is now the primary free testing site in the Tri-Cities.
- **BFHD testing page:** [Testing Sites - Benton Franklin Health District \(wa.gov\)](#)
 - BFHD is currently providing testing depot services to long term care facilities, H2A, Food processors/Agriculture workers, congregate settings such as jails, and homeless shelters, EMS/FIRE/PD and other critical infrastructure facilities.
 - **Test to treat locations can be [found here](#).**

- Our community test sites volume started to increase again in June. Positivity rates have continued to increase to over 30%.
- The state has replenished its supply of at home tests available for delivery at <https://sayyescovidhometest.org>. Each household can now order twice per month while supplies last. Kits available from the federal government can be ordered at <https://www.covidtests.gov>.
- BFHD staff continue to participate in outreach events and have at home test kits available to the community. Staff are also educating the community about testing early and often and before social get togethers to reduce the spread of Covid.
- Free N95 masks can be located here: [Find Free Masks \(N95 Respirators\) | CDC](#)

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

- BFHD Media briefings are being held as needed to communicate updates. To receive an invite email EOC.PIO@bfhd.wa.gov to get a media briefing invite.
- One Tuesday per month at 2:00pm - BFHD hosts local elected officials and decision-makers conference call

PPE RECEIVING/DISTRIBUTION:

- List of PPE vendors the state uses to procure PPE items
<https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/ContractingPurchasing/covid19/Vendors.pdf>

CURRENT RISKS:

- Confirmed case rates have continued to increase as compared to May data. When reviewing the combined Wastewater levels and the CDC level of Community Transmission metrics, Benton-Franklin Counties are seeing an overall increase in Covid-19 cases again.
- At home tests continue to gain in popularity, due to this Benton Franklin Health District has adjusted the metrics used to evaluate disease burden. Wastewater metrics used in combination with other data over time can provide an early warning system. COVID-19 Case Counts, Reports and Metrics - Benton Franklin Health District (wa.gov)
- Outbreaks have significantly increased as compared to previous months' outbreak lists. Long Term Care and Adult Family homes are of particular concern.
- Vaccine hesitancy/resistance in our community continues to be high. Childhood vaccine uptake continues to lag behind state metrics. Due to these hesitancies, assumed uptake of Covid –19 vaccine is also anticipated to be quite low.
- The growing season and agriculture processing plants have started production. This brings in additional workforce that may have limited vaccine uptake which has the potential for spread of disease in close working environments.
- Long Term Care Facilities and Adult Family homes have low booster rates which creates significant risk for these elderly congregate housing populations. Benton Franklin Health District has increased engagement with these facilities to increase booster rates for residents and staff.
- Benton & Franklin communities show a high level of fatigue with everything related to covid with a common refrain being “we’re done with covid”. This has led to relaxed mitigation precautions in the community with regard to masking, social distancing, and testing.

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION:

- Benton-Franklin Health District- All News: <https://www.bfhd.wa.gov>
- Washington State Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

- REDI Healthcare Coalition: <https://srhd.org/programs-and-services/hcc/eei->

DISTRIBUTED TO:

Local Health Jurisdiction: Management Team, EOC/ECC Staff, all BFHD Staff

Region 8: Local Emergency Response Coordinators, Emergency Management agencies, healthcare partners, Fire/EMS agencies

WA State: Regional Emergency Response Coordinators, DOH Duty Officer

Eastern WA: REDi Coalition Duty Officer

Cross Boarder: Oregon Regions 6 and 9 Liaisons